

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device for detecting a fingerprint of a fingertip placed on a contact surface of a fingerprint input section, comprising:

a moving element for moving the contact surface when the fingertip is placed on the contact surface;

a lock mechanism for fixing said contact surface when said contact surface is moved to predetermined position; and

a detecting unit for detecting the fingerprint when said contact surface is fixed by said lock mechanism to said predetermined position.

2. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said lock mechanism comprises a switch for producing a signal when said contact surface is fixed to said lock mechanism; and

said detecting unit is energized to detect the fingerprint when said detecting unit receives said signal from said switch.

3. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said moving element comprises an energizing member which withstands movement of said contact surface to make a pressure imposed onto said contact surface substantially uniform until said contact surface is fixed to said predetermined position.

4. A device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said moving element comprises an energizing member which withstands movement of said contact surface to make a pressure imposed onto said contact surface substantially uniform until said contact surface is fixed to said predetermined position.

5. A device as claimed in claim 1, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

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means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

6. A device as claimed in claim 2, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

7. A device as claimed in claim 3, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

8. A device as claimed in claim <sup>20</sup>1, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

9. A device as claimed in claim <sup>20</sup>1, wherein said detecting unit comprises a solid-state image sensor for scanning a fingerprint image into a sequence of data signals.

10. A device as claimed in claim <sup>20</sup>1, wherein said detecting unit comprises:

a converting circuit to convert a variable pressure from the fingertip into a variable electric resistance; and

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11. A device for detecting a fingerprint as claimed in claim 1, wherein said detecting unit comprises:

a measuring circuit to measure said variable capacitance.

13. An electric apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the device is operable as a power switch.

15. An electric apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein the device is operable as a power switch.

17. A doorkeeper apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the device is operable as a doorbell switch.

18. A doorkeeper apparatus which controls a door lock mechanism and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said doorkeeper apparatus opens a door when the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is coincident with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

19. A doorkeeper apparatus as claimed in claim 18, wherein the device is operable as a doorbell switch.

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